

# Law & Social Sciences (LSS)

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## PROGRAM SOLICITATION NSF 12-507

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### REPLACES DOCUMENT(S): PD 98-1372

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#### National Science Foundation

Directorate for Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences  
Division of Social and Economic Sciences

#### Full Proposal Target Date(s):

January 24, 2012

July 16, 2012

July 15, Annually Thereafter

January 15, 2013

January 15, Annually Thereafter

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND REVISION NOTES

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We changed the program description to a solicitation. We have clarified the range of areas that we fund, with the aim of ensuring that members of our communities see their projects as within the Law & Social Sciences (LSS) Program. We have added the Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships mechanism to the array of funding mechanisms available. The target date for our Fall competition has been moved from August to July and we now only have one target date per year for our DDRIG proposals which is in January.

#### Important Reminders

A revised version of the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG), [NSF 11-1](#), was issued on October 1, 2010 and is effective for proposals submitted, or due, on or after January 18, 2011. Please be advised that the guidelines contained in [NSF 11-1](#) apply to proposals submitted in response to this funding opportunity.

**Cost Sharing:** The PAPPG has been revised to implement the National Science Board's recommendations regarding cost sharing. Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited. In order to assess the scope of the project, all organizational resources necessary for the project must be described in the Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources section of the proposal. The description should be narrative in nature and must not include any quantifiable financial information. Mandatory cost sharing will only be required when explicitly authorized by the NSF Director. See the PAPP Guide Part I: *Grant Proposal Guide (GPG)* [Chapter II.C.2.g\(xi\)](#) for further information about the implementation of these recommendations.

**Data Management Plan:** The PAPPG contains a clarification of NSF's long standing data policy. All proposals must describe plans for data management and sharing of the products of research, or assert the absence of the need for such plans. FastLane will not permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Data Management Plan. The Data Management Plan will be reviewed as part of the intellectual merit or broader impacts of the proposal, or both, as appropriate. Links to data management requirements and plans relevant to specific Directorates, Offices, Divisions, Programs, or other NSF units are available on the NSF website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>. See [Chapter II.C.2.j](#) of the GPG for further information about the implementation of this requirement.

**Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan:** As a reminder, each proposal that requests funding to support postdoctoral researchers must include, as a supplementary document, a description of the mentoring activities that will be provided for such individuals. Please be advised that if required, FastLane will not permit submission of a proposal that is missing a Postdoctoral Researcher Mentoring Plan. See [Chapter II.C.2.j](#) of the GPG for further information about the implementation of this requirement.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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### General Information

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#### Program Title:

Law & Social Sciences (LSS)

## Synopsis of Program:

The Law & Social Sciences Program considers proposals that address social scientific studies of law and law-like systems of rules. The program is inherently interdisciplinary and multi-methodological. Successful proposals describe research that advances scientific theory and understanding of the connections between law or legal processes and human behavior. Social scientific studies of law often approach law as dynamic, made in multiple arenas, with the participation of multiple actors. Fields of study include many disciplines, and often address problems including though not limited to:

1. Crime, Violence and Punishment
2. Economic Issues
3. Governance
4. Legal Decision making
5. Legal Mobilization and Conceptions of Justice
6. Litigation and the Legal Profession

LSS provides the following modes of support:

1. Standard Research Grants and Grants for Collaborative Research
2. Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants
3. Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships
4. Workshop and Conference Proposals

## Cognizant Program Officer(s):

*Please note that the following information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.*

- Susan Sterett, 995 N, telephone: (703) 292-7267, email: [ssterett@nsf.gov](mailto:ssterett@nsf.gov)
- Marjorie Zatz, 995 N, telephone: (703) 292-7808, email: [mzatz@nsf.gov](mailto:mzatz@nsf.gov)
- Allison Smith, 995 N, telephone: (703) 292-7094, email: [asmith@nsf.gov](mailto:asmith@nsf.gov)

## Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):

- 47.075 --- Social Behavioral and Economic Sciences

## Award Information

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**Anticipated Type of Award:** Standard Grant or Continuing Grant or Cooperative Agreement

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 75

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$5,000,000 pending availability of funds

## Eligibility Information

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### Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Organization limit varies by the mode of support:
  - Standard Research Grants and Grants for Collaborative Research: No limitations (see the GPG for categories of proposers eligible to submit proposals to NSF).
  - Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships: US Academic Institutions.
  - Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants: US Academic Institutions.
  - Conference and Workshop Support: No limitations (see the GPG for categories of proposers eligible to submit proposals to NSF).

See Section II. Program Description for detailed information about each mode of support.

### PI Limit:

PI eligibility limit varies by the mode of support. See Section II. Program Description for detailed information about each mode of support.

### Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

None Specified

### Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:

None Specified

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

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### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

- **Letters of Intent:** Not Applicable
- **Preliminary Proposal Submission:** Not Applicable

- **Full Proposals:**
  - Full Proposals submitted via FastLane: NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide, Part I: Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) Guidelines apply. The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg).
  - Full Proposals submitted via Grants.gov: NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov Guidelines apply (Note: The NSF Grants.gov Application Guide is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=grantsgovguide))

## B. Budgetary Information

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** Not Applicable
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

## C. Due Dates

- **Full Proposal Target Date(s):**
  - January 24, 2012
  - July 16, 2012
  - July 15, Annually Thereafter
  - January 15, 2013
  - January 15, Annually Thereafter

## Proposal Review Information Criteria

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**Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria apply.

## Award Administration Information

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**Award Conditions:** Standard NSF award conditions apply.

**Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The Law & Social Sciences Program at the National Science Foundation supports social scientific studies of law and law-like systems of rules. The program is inherently interdisciplinary and multi-methodological. Successful proposals describe research that advances scientific theory and understanding of the connections between law or legal processes and human behavior. Social scientific studies of law often approach law as dynamic, made in multiple arenas, with the participation of multiple actors. The program considers and funds proposals from many disciplinary perspectives, including anthropology, communication, criminology, economics, legal scholarship, political science, public policy, psychology, and sociology.

## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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### An Overview of Program Components

The Law & Social Sciences Program at the National Science Foundation supports social scientific studies of law and law-like systems of rules. Successful proposals describe research that advances scientific theory and understanding of the connections between law or legal processes and human behavior. The Law & Social Sciences program funds the best proposals submitted within the field broadly defined, regardless of specific subfield, and strives to support an interdisciplinary community of scholars studying relevant topics.

Social scientific studies of law often approach law as dynamic, made in multiple arenas, with the participation of multiple actors. Scholars study mobilization, the creation and implementation of law, and the meanings of rules or laws to both individuals and institutions. The program considers proposals that examine historical, social, cultural and policy-related questions that arise concerning law, and invites proposals relying upon both qualitative and quantitative methods. The program also considers and funds proposals from many different disciplines, including anthropology, communication, criminology, economics, legal scholarship, political science, public policy, psychology, and sociology. The sites for the study of law are multiple and may include appellate and trial courts; domestic and international regulatory offices; federal, state, and local law enforcement; and the variety of settings in which organizations deploy law. Proposals are welcome that address legal processes that extend beyond any single nation, as well as about how local and national legal institutions, systems, and cultures engage transnational or international phenomena.

The Law & Social Sciences program has funded research on a wide variety of topics relevant to social science and legal scholars. The themes identified below are representative of previous awards from the Law & Social Sciences Program, but do not constitute an exclusive listing of relevant topics. Scholars conducting research in social science related to law (broadly defined) that are outside or beyond these major themes are also encouraged to apply for funding.

**Crime, Violence, and Punishment:** Research develops theories of crime and methods of crime control based upon social science theories. It examines the etiology of violence in the context of domestic criminal behavior, terrorism, and cross-national conflict.

**Economic Issues:** Research explores the significance of property rules or contracts in legal disputes, claims in social welfare states, and the role of law in labor and migration policies.

**Governance:** Research examines the deployment of law, including conceptions of what counts as law both cross-nationally and over time. Inquiry in this area addresses how rules have been understood, and the varying format that governing takes in local, regional, national and transnational settings.

**Legal Decision Making:** Research examines how people and institutions make decisions in the context of particular rules or statutes, and the values revealed in those decisions concerning pressing public issues or criminal justice processes. Research also examines how law is interpreted and reinterpreted by individuals, and how expectations concerning the law influence how people claim rights and responsibilities.

**Legal Mobilization and Conceptions of Justice:** Research assesses how and when people understand their challenges as legal problems, how individuals choose among systems to pursue justice (e.g., family, communities, non-profit organizations, or state actors), how individuals or groups access justice systems (as well as various equity issues that arise in mobilizing justice), and how well individuals and groups understand justice.

**Litigation and Legal Professions:** Research addresses the mutual constitution of the legal professions and the world in which they work, and assesses the influence of these professions on public policies and policies. Research also investigates the various forms of litigation and legal services available to people, professionals' understanding of their ethics and responsibility, and issues regarding equity in participation in the profession.

These topics are meant to be illustrative. The Law & Social Sciences Program welcomes all scholarship that advances social scientific understandings of law.

Research can use a variety of methods, including ethnography, analysis of documents, interviews, case studies, surveys, quasi-experimental and experimental approaches, network analysis, and content analysis, or a combination thereof. The methods should be appropriate to the research questions.

### MODES OF SUPPORT

#### 1. STANDARD RESEARCH GRANTS AND GRANTS FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Standard and Collaborative awards include proposals for research, infrastructure or education projects. These grants can also support projects that require several investigators, advisors, or collaboration among Principal Investigators, including investigators at different institutions. They may involve postdoctoral researchers, or graduate or undergraduate student assistants. Projects provide support for basic research activities, infrastructure development, and other research-related expenses. Support for Principal Investigators and co-Principal Investigators will generally not exceed two months per year of the project. Exceptional circumstances that might require monthly support during the academic year for a Principal Investigator will be considered with the approval of the Program Officers; in such instances, the Program Officers must be consulted prior to the submission of a proposal.

#### Guidelines for Standard and Collaborative Grants

Standard research and collaborative grant proposals should be prepared following the guidelines of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide. Generally speaking, regular and collaborative awards will not exceed \$300,000 in direct costs over two to three years' duration. Proposals requesting a longer duration or larger amount of support may be considered if extraordinarily well justified and merited.

Indirect costs assessed by institutions will be added to these levels of support.

## **2. INTERDISCIPLINARY POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS**

Law & Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships are intended to facilitate the training of interdisciplinary scholars. Proposals should be submitted by two or more faculty scholars from different academic disciplines who will work with the postdoctoral fellow on a single project of relevance to Law & Social Sciences. Funds will support the participation of a postdoctoral fellow who will receive training and research experience in this interdisciplinary context.

### **Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships**

- Because the fellowship is to facilitate interdisciplinary scholarship and the career development of a young scholar, proposals must describe the training and research components that the co-investigators will offer to the postdoctoral scholar they select. Proposals must include a Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan.
- The postdoctoral fellow need not be identified in the proposal, but may be selected after an award is made. Proposers may request lead time of up to 6 months to facilitate the recruitment process (at no cost), and the proposal should describe both the recruitment process and the type of scholar the faculty will seek.
- Funds should be requested to directly support a postdoctoral fellow, including salary, fringe benefits and other direct costs necessary for completion of the proposed project. Funds may be requested to support dissemination of the research by the postdoctoral fellow at academic or professional conferences. Requested funds should not exceed \$80,000 in direct costs over a 12-month period. A maximum of 24 months of consecutive funding may be requested, in addition to a 6-month (no cost) period for recruitment.
- Proposals should be prepared following the same format as a regular NSF proposal (see the NSF Grant Proposal Guide for details).

### **Eligibility Requirements for Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships**

These awards are made to U.S. academic institutions.

## **3. DOCTORAL DISSERTATION RESEARCH IMPROVEMENT GRANTS**

These awards provide funds for dissertation research expenses not normally available through the doctoral student's university. The dissertation advisor is the Principal Investigator on these proposals; the doctoral student should be listed as Co-Principal Investigator.

Dissertation proposals should be prepared in accordance with the guidelines for the [SBE Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants Solicitation](#). The Project Description should not exceed 10 pages and should describe the scientific significance of the work, including its relationship to other current research, and the design of the project in sufficient detail to permit evaluation. It should present and interpret progress to date if the research is already underway. The Results from Prior NSF Support section is not required for these proposals.

Awards are not intended to cover the full costs of a student's doctoral dissertation research. Funds may be used only for valid research expenses which include, but are not limited to, conducting field research in settings away from campus that would not otherwise be possible, data collection and sample survey costs, payments to subjects or informants, specialized research equipment, analysis and services not otherwise available, supplies, travel to archives, special collections or seminars, and facilities or field research locations, and partial living expenses for conducting necessary research away from the student's university. Funds are to be used exclusively for the actual conduct of dissertation research. These funds may not be used as a student stipend, for tuition, textbooks, journals, or for the typing, reproduction, or publication costs of the student's dissertation. Funds may be requested for research assistants only in very special circumstances, which should be carefully justified.

The proposal must include a letter from the faculty advisor. This document is not intended as a traditional recommendation, but should evaluate the student's promise as a researcher, the student's capabilities for undertaking this project, and the value and status of the proposed research. It should also discuss the student's current progress in the graduate program, affirming when the student passed the qualifying exams, completed all course work required for the degree, and had the dissertation topic approved. If the doctoral student will use the award for travel expenses to work with a specialist, the proposal should provide a justification for this choice and a letter from the specialist agreeing to work with the student. These requirements must be met before an award will be made. Letters should be submitted in the Supplementary Documentation section of the FastLane proposal.

### **Guidelines for Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants**

- Dissertation awards must not exceed \$20,000 in direct costs.

### **Eligibility Requirements for Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants**

- Doctoral students who are enrolled in US graduate programs are eligible to apply. The dissertation advisor is the principal investigator.
- Doctoral students must have passed the qualifying exams, completed all course work required for the degree, and had the dissertation topic approved prior to receiving the award.
- These awards are made to U.S. academic institutions.

## **4. CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP AWARDS**

Conference and Workshop proposals should be prepared in accordance with the NSF Grant Proposal Guide and the additional information below. Investigators who are interested in submitting such a proposal should contact one of the Law & Social Science Program Officers prior to submission.

The Law & Social Sciences program will support national and international conferences, symposia, and research workshops that enable social scientists and legal scholars to develop, evaluate, and share new research findings. The program encourages conferences and symposia that promote interactions between researchers across multiple disciplines within the Law & Social Sciences domain.

Proposals for conference or workshop support should describe the need for the gathering, the proposed date and location, topics and persons who will be involved, prior related meetings, publicity, and expected outcomes. Every effort must be made to include younger scholars and members of underrepresented groups, and these efforts should be described in the proposal. Conferences and workshops may, where justified, be carried out as special sessions in regular meetings of professional societies. NSF-funded workshops and conferences are generally open to scholars from across the research community.

### **Guidelines for Conference and Workshop Awards**

- Prospective Principal Investigators are encouraged to consult with the Program Officers prior to submission of a Conference or Workshop proposal.
- Conference and Workshop proposals do not generally exceed \$30,000 in direct costs.

## 5. OTHER GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The Law & Social Sciences program may provide supplemental funding to existing awards in order to create research experiences for undergraduates (REU; see the [REU Solicitation](#) in the listings of NSF funding opportunities). The Law & Social Sciences program also participates in most Foundation-wide initiatives, such as CAREER, ADVANCE, MRI, and RCN. Information about these opportunities can be found at the [NSF Home Page](#), by linking to the funding opportunities alphabetical listing or to the cross-cutting programs section of the page. Investigators can also use the search feature to find relevant documents, and may wish to visit the [SBE Office of Multidisciplinary Activities website](#).

## III. AWARD INFORMATION

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**Anticipated Type of Award:** Continuing Grant or Cooperative Agreement or Standard Grant

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 75

**Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$5,000,000 pending availability of funds

## IV. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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### Organization Limit:

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

- Organization limit varies by the mode of support:
  - Standard Research Grants and Grants for Collaborative Research: No limitations (see the GPG for categories of proposers eligible to submit proposals to NSF).
  - Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowships: US Academic Institutions.
  - Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants: US Academic Institutions.
  - Conference and Workshop Support: No limitations (see the GPG for categories of proposers eligible to submit proposals to NSF).

See Section II. Program Description for detailed information about each mode of support.

### PI Limit:

PI eligibility limit varies by the mode of support. See Section II. Program Description for detailed information about each mode of support.

### Limit on Number of Proposals per Organization:

None Specified

### Limit on Number of Proposals per PI:

None Specified

## V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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### A. Proposal Preparation Instructions

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**Full Proposal Preparation Instructions:** Proposers may opt to submit proposals in response to this Program Solicitation via Grants.gov or via the NSF FastLane system.

- Full proposals submitted via FastLane: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF website at: [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpg](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpg). Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov). Proposers are reminded to identify this program solicitation number in the program solicitation block on the NSF Cover Sheet For Proposal to the National Science Foundation. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.
- Full proposals submitted via Grants.gov: Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation via Grants.gov should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for the Preparation and Submission of NSF Applications via Grants.gov. The complete text of the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide is available on the Grants.gov website and on the NSF website at: ([http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?)

[ods\\_key=grantsgovguide](#)). To obtain copies of the Application Guide and Application Forms Package, click on the Apply tab on the Grants.gov site, then click on the Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Application Instructions link and enter the funding opportunity number, (the program solicitation number without the NSF prefix) and press the Download Package button. Paper copies of the Grants.gov Application Guide also may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

In determining which method to utilize in the electronic preparation and submission of the proposal, please note the following:

**Collaborative Proposals.** All collaborative proposals submitted as separate submissions from multiple organizations must be submitted via the NSF FastLane system. Chapter II, Section D.4 of the Grant Proposal Guide provides additional information on collaborative proposals.

## B. Budgetary Information

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**Cost Sharing:** Inclusion of voluntary committed cost sharing is prohibited

**Other Budgetary Limitations:** Other budgetary limitations apply. Please see the full text of this solicitation for further information.

## C. Due Dates

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- **Full Proposal Target Date(s):**

January 24, 2012

July 16, 2012

July 15, Annually Thereafter

January 15, 2013

January 15, Annually Thereafter

## D. FastLane/Grants.gov Requirements

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- **For Proposals Submitted Via FastLane:**

Detailed technical instructions regarding the technical aspects of preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call the FastLane Help Desk at 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov). The FastLane Help Desk answers general technical questions related to the use of the FastLane system. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this funding opportunity.

**Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets.** The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see Chapter II, Section C of the Grant Proposal Guide for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required electronic certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane Website at: <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>.

- **For Proposals Submitted Via Grants.gov:**

Before using Grants.gov for the first time, each organization must register to create an institutional profile. Once registered, the applicant's organization can then apply for any federal grant on the Grants.gov website. Comprehensive information about using Grants.gov is available on the Grants.gov Applicant Resources webpage:

[http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/app\\_help\\_reso.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp). In addition, the NSF Grants.gov Application Guide provides additional technical guidance regarding preparation of proposals via Grants.gov. For Grants.gov user support, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 or by email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Grants.gov Contact Center answers general technical questions related to the use of Grants.gov. Specific questions related to this program solicitation should be referred to the NSF program staff contact(s) listed in Section VIII of this solicitation.

**Submitting the Proposal:** Once all documents have been completed, the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit the application to Grants.gov and verify the desired funding opportunity and agency to which the application is submitted. The AOR must then sign and submit the application to Grants.gov. The completed application will be transferred to the NSF FastLane system for further processing.

## VI. NSF PROPOSAL PROCESSING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

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Proposals received by NSF are assigned to the appropriate NSF program where they will be reviewed if they meet NSF proposal preparation requirements. All proposals are carefully reviewed by a scientist, engineer, or educator serving as an NSF Program Officer, and usually by three to ten other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular fields represented by the proposal. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. Proposers are invited to suggest names of persons they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal and/or persons they would prefer not review the proposal. These suggestions may serve as one source in the reviewer selection process at the Program Officer's discretion. Submission of such names, however, is optional. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts of interest with the proposal.



## A. NSF Merit Review Criteria

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All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of the two National Science Board (NSB)-approved merit review criteria: intellectual merit and the broader impacts of the proposed effort. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities.

The two NSB-approved merit review criteria are listed below. The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which the reviewer is qualified to make judgments.

### **What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?**

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

### **What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?**

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Examples illustrating activities likely to demonstrate broader impacts are available electronically on the NSF website at: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/broaderimpacts.pdf>.

Mentoring activities provided to postdoctoral researchers supported on the project, as described in a one-page supplementary document, will be evaluated under the Broader Impacts criterion.

NSF staff also will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

### ***Integration of Research and Education***

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

### ***Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities***

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

## B. Review and Selection Process

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Proposals submitted in response to this program solicitation will be reviewed by Ad hoc Review and/or Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

After scientific, technical and programmatic review and consideration of appropriate factors, the NSF Program Officer recommends to the cognizant Division Director whether the proposal should be declined or recommended for award. NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the deadline or target date, or receipt date, whichever is later. The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Officer. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at their own risk.

## VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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### A. Notification of the Award

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Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See Section VI.B. for additional information on the review process.)

## B. Award Conditions

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An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (GC-1); \* or Research Terms and Conditions \* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreements also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Financial and Administrative Terms and Conditions (CA-FATC) and the applicable Programmatic Terms and Conditions. NSF awards are electronically signed by an NSF Grants and Agreements Officer and transmitted electronically to the organization via e-mail.

\*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award\\_conditions.jsp?org=NSF](http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/award_conditions.jsp?org=NSF). Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (703) 292-7827 or by e-mail from [nsfpubs@nsf.gov](mailto:nsfpubs@nsf.gov).

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Award & Administration Guide* (AAG) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=aag](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag).

## C. Reporting Requirements

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For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the Principal Investigator must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period. (Some programs or awards require more frequent project reports). Within 90 days after expiration of a grant, the PI also is required to submit a final project report, and a project outcomes report for the general public.

Failure to provide the required annual or final project reports, or the project outcomes report will delay NSF review and processing of any future funding increments as well as any pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

PIs are required to use NSF's electronic project-reporting system, available through FastLane, for preparation and submission of annual and final project reports. Such reports provide information on activities and findings, project participants (individual and organizational), publications, and other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system. Submission of the report via FastLane constitutes certification by the PI that the contents of the report are accurate and complete. The project outcomes report must be prepared and submitted using Research.gov. This report serves as a brief summary, prepared specifically for the public, of the nature and outcomes of the project. This report will be posted on the NSF website exactly as it is submitted by the PI.

More comprehensive information on NSF Reporting Requirements and other important information on the administration of NSF awards is contained in the *NSF Award & Administration Guide* (AAG) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Website at [http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=aag](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=aag).

## VIII. AGENCY CONTACTS

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*Please note that the program contact information is current at the time of publishing. See program website for any updates to the points of contact.*

General inquiries regarding this program should be made to:

- Susan Sterett, 995 N, telephone: (703) 292-7267, email: [ssterett@nsf.gov](mailto:ssterett@nsf.gov)
- Marjorie Zatz, 995 N, telephone: (703) 292-7808, email: [mzatz@nsf.gov](mailto:mzatz@nsf.gov)
- Allison Smith, 995 N, telephone: (703) 292-7094, email: [asmith@nsf.gov](mailto:asmith@nsf.gov)

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- FastLane Help Desk, telephone: 1-800-673-6188; e-mail: [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov).

For questions relating to Grants.gov contact:

- Grants.gov Contact Center: If the Authorized Organizational Representatives (AOR) has not received a confirmation message from Grants.gov within 48 hours of submission of application, please contact via telephone: 1-800-518-4726; e-mail: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

## IX. OTHER INFORMATION

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The NSF Website provides the most comprehensive source of information on NSF Directorates (including contact information), programs and funding opportunities. Use of this Website by potential proposers is strongly encouraged. In addition, National Science Foundation Update is a free e-mail subscription service designed to keep potential proposers and other interested parties apprised of new NSF funding opportunities and publications, important changes in proposal and award policies and procedures, and upcoming NSF Regional Grants Conferences. Subscribers are informed through e-mail when new publications are issued that match their identified interests. Users can subscribe to this service by clicking the "Get NSF Updates by Email" link on the [NSF web site](#).

Grants.gov provides an additional electronic capability to search for Federal government-wide grant opportunities. NSF funding opportunities may be accessed via this new mechanism. Further information on Grants.gov may be obtained at <http://www.grants.gov>.

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent Federal agency created by the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended (42 USC 1861-75). The Act states the purpose of the NSF is "to promote the progress of science; [and] to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare by supporting research and education in all fields of science and engineering."

NSF funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the US. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of Federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 55,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships. The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Arctic and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

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The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090 and (800) 281-8749, FIRS at (800) 877-8339.

The National Science Foundation Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

The National Science Foundation promotes and advances scientific progress in the United States by competitively awarding grants and cooperative agreements for research and education in the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

To get the latest information about program deadlines, to download copies of NSF publications, and to access abstracts of awards, visit the NSF Website at <http://www.nsf.gov>

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## PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; and project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to proposer institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies or other entities needing information regarding applicants or nominees as part of a joint application review process, or in order to coordinate programs or policy; and to another Federal agency, court, or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 69 Federal Register 26410 (May 12, 2004), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 69 Federal Register 26410 (May 12, 2004). Submission of the

information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, an information collection unless it displays a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to:

Suzanne H. Plimpton  
Reports Clearance Officer  
Division of Administrative Services  
National Science Foundation  
Arlington, VA 22230

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	The National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22230, USA Tel: (703) 292-5111, FIRS: (800) 877-8339   TDD: (800) 281-8749					Last Updated: 11/07/06 <a href="#">Text Only</a>